


1968

A Study of Grading Art Work Concerning Secondary Art Instructors in the State of Washington

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A STUDY OF GRADING ART WORK
CONCERNING SECONDARY ART INSTRUCTORS
IN THE STATE OF WASHINGTON

A Thesis
Presented to
the Graduate Faculty
Central Washington State College

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Education

by
Darwin Dean Evans

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The grading of art work done by the students of Washington State secondary schools is usually carried out by one art instructor in each school and most of these teachers have backgrounds which influence them to be as objective as possible whenever they assign grades. Fairness and accuracy is usually of prime concern to the teacher. It should be realized, however, that the grades assigned are also influenced by the instructor's personality, character, environment, aesthetic judgment, etc., and are therefore somewhat subjective. It can be assumed that variations in grades concerning the same art work would be encountered from teacher to teacher. The extent to which bias enters into the grading of art work has not yet been assessed. Thus, the prime reason for this study is to assess the amount of concurrence among art instructors concerning grading.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to assess in a controlled manner the extent of concurrence among secondary art instructors in the State of Washington with respect to the grading of certain art work produced by juniors in a secondary school.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Grading art work in our secondary schools has been a controversial subject for a considerable length of time. Many secondary art instructors feel the need for a more effective and concrete guide upon which to base grades. These questions arise:

1. If a person is creative or inventive, how can an instructor place grades solely on his art works?
2. If most art instructors would place different grades or ratings on the same art work, of what value are the grades?
3. If art instructors in our secondary schools tend to disagree about what grades should be given to certain pieces of art work, could research be done in order to gain more unity and understanding among these teachers?

A change in procedure and philosophy for grading may be in the offing if instructors are to attain a more uniform set of standards upon which to assign grades to students. The results of this survey will provide statistical information that may serve as a helpful guide in the evaluation of secondary art work.

JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

If pertinent data could be obtained concerning secondary art work and grades which would indicate the amount of agreement among secondary teachers, it would serve

as an important body of information which should aid in the understanding and values developed among secondary art teachers. Clearly, the need for evaluation devices based on instructional objectives which will provide clear evidence of pupil attainments, and which will facilitate decisions upon progress, would be valuable in our secondary institutions.

CHAPTER II

PROCEDURE OF THE STUDY

The procedure taken in this study involved three major areas:

1. The gathering of the appropriate art pieces and the formulation of a workable data form to be used in the survey.
2. The surveying task of contacting secondary high school art instructors which involved meeting with them and attaining the data required for the study.
3. Analysis and reporting the data.

THE SELECTION OF THE RESEARCH MATERIALS

All of the paintings used for the survey were completed by juniors in a three-year high school.

A secondary art instructor teaching at A. C. Davis High School in Yakima, Washington, gave his class of second-year art students two painting assignments: the students were to complete two paintings, each using tempera paint only, and were to use heavy, white construction paper. The themes for the two paintings were to be "Psychedelic" and "Heads" and each painting was to consist of five working class hours. The "Psychedelic" paintings were done on 12" x 18" paper and the "Heads" paintings on 18" x 24" paper. Upon completion of the two assignments, twelve

paintings were picked from the students' work for use in this survey. All of the "Psychedelic" paintings were abstract and all of the "Heads" paintings were somewhat realistic due to the fact that each "Heads" composition involved human heads as subject matter.

THE SURVEY DATA FORM

The survey data form was designed to obtain the following points of information concerning each of the instructors surveyed:

1. The size of the school in which each instructor surveyed was currently working.
2. The size of the town in which the school was located with respect to each instructor.
3. The progression of numbers revealing each teacher's ranking of the paintings.

THE RESEARCH SETTING

Time of the Survey

This survey was taken during January through June of 1968. Most of the instructors were contacted and participated in this survey during the late afternoons on weekdays and on weekends.

Controls of the Survey

Every effort was made to prevent instructors from discussing this survey among themselves prior to each individual's participation in it.

All of the paintings were mounted on heavy cardboard and matted. The paintings were kept in a carrying case to protect them from the elements to insure their original condition throughout the survey period. Precautionary measures were taken to adequately illuminate the pictures during each viewing, and each painting was clearly numbered progressing from one through twelve.

The Survey Method

All of the art instructors who participated in this survey were either contacted by telephone or in some cases, were approached regarding the survey immediately following personal introduction. Due to the time element involved, no instructors were contacted by mail.

After acceptance from the various teachers to participate in the survey, the twelve paintings were placed in front of the teachers so that all of the paintings could be viewed at one time. The instructions and background information which was written on each survey data form were then read. Each teacher was asked to select the painting from the whole group that he felt was best, then next best, etc., successively until all twelve paintings were in a stack progressing from the highest to the lowest in rank order. The progression of numbers was then recorded on the data form along with the size of the school and the size of the

town in which the instructor was located. Each secondary instructor was contacted by only this investigator for this survey.

The Size of the Sample and the Location of the Survey

Thirty-three secondary teachers participated in this survey. All were currently teaching in the State of Washington. Yakima, Selah, Naches, Wapato, West Valley, Toppenish, Sunnyside, Richland, Kennewick, Seattle, Tacoma, Pasco, and a few rural schools were among those towns and cities in which the participating instructors were located. In general, the greatest portion of the instructors who participated in this survey were located in the Yakima Valley.

CHAPTER III

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Authoritative Statements on the Importance of the Problem

The nature of this research survey was to provide information which would eventually be influential in bringing art instructors' procedures and concepts for grading to a more standardized relationship. It is vital for secondary art instructors to feel that they are all in somewhat agreement and it is vital to be conscious of the ultimate relation between the objectives of learning and the instruments used to determine progress towards their goals. Arthur D. Morse (5:29-40) has expressed his opinion which relates to this study as follows:

Report cards purport to be based on a fixed standard but the standards vary from teacher to teacher. Even if the standard is fixed accurately, a "mark" can only compare a youngster to the rest of the group and may have no relationship to his potential. The report card tends to bring undue pressure on the slower pupils while it fails to challenge the more gifted student.

Goodland (6:57-59) provides some insight towards the problem by writing:

Variations in meaning and standards from teacher to teacher and from course to course are notorious. Yet in private conversation, teachers seem to be in general accord as to the quality of work expected at various levels of ability.

There are several other studies which are related to this survey. In a report by Melvin Tumin (7:23-37), he

approached the grading of art work with these comments:

The teacher who grades students and rewards them with her time, her attention and her affection on the basis of how polished are their art products is helping to perpetuate and intensify one of the major sicknesses of our time: the tendency towards closing our frontiers by rigidification.

John Michael (8:98-104) expresses a similar belief towards the grading of art work:

Creative growth and development is greatest when the pupil creates from his own experience in a free and permissive situation where there is no stress on the final product and self-expression is emphasized. Imposed standards tend to suppress individuality and quality of expression while emphasizing the final product.

These statements show that professional educators are interested in new evidence which could help to solve some of the problems relating to grading. Let it be said that to judge aesthetic quality is to take a risk, not of being wrong--that would be difficult to be demonstrated, but of being relative. This relativity extends to one's cultural values, training, temperament, judge set, etc. When a vital definition of art is seen, as of necessity being changing and open-ended, then any discussion of evaluation must likewise stand ready to continually re-open the entire issue of judging and evaluation. This usually means a search for essential criteria.

Research on the Problem

The amount of scientific research that has been done concerning the extent of concurrence of grading among art educators is unfortunately small. However, there have been some studies concerning aesthetics and grading that contain information which has some bearing on this survey.

Gloria Bernheim (9:32-3), while working on a co-operative research project, came to some conclusions which have a relationship to this survey. She concluded that: (1) the kind of spontaneous judgment a judge makes on a given art product depends greatly upon the kind of personality characteristics he, himself, has and, (2) the kind of aesthetic judgment he produces, the amount of training he has had and his level of sophistication. Bernheim also summarized that when a judgment is made, it is usually subjective and personal and therefore, what one might be evaluating is simply the unstable and subjective choices of the judge.

Harold McWhinne (10:34-41) conducted a study of aesthetic judgments and preferences. His conclusions are listed here as follows:

1. Some individuals would seem to prefer a high degree of complexity whereas others prefer a high degree of order.
2. There seems to be a high degree of correlation between aesthetic choice as measured by geometric and abstract figures and preferences as measured by reproductions of works of art.

It would seem that perceptual preference depends upon visual elements in the stimulus object and not on the subject matter of works of art.

3. Subjects with training in art seem to prefer the more complex figures whereas those without training in art prefer the simple figures. It would seem that perceptual choice is affected by previous learning.
4. It would seem that the configurational properties of the stimulus object alone does not determine the perceptual choice of the subject.

CHAPTER IV

STATISTICAL TREATMENT OF THE DATA

Data Method

Upon completion of this survey, the mean and standard deviation was computed for each picture. The mean was computed for:

1. Each group of pictures (Psychedelics, Heads).
2. Each group of pictures with respect to the ten largest schools and the ten smallest schools.
3. Each group of pictures with respect to the ten largest cities and the ten smallest cities.

Data Method for Each Painting

The mean was found for each picture by adding the numerical ranking of each picture as rated by the instructors who participated in the survey. The total of the scores for each picture was then divided by thirty-three, the size of the sample, to find the mean score for each picture. The mean score indicated the average ranking of each picture as a result of the survey.

The standard deviation for each picture was then computed using the figures gained from finding the mean of each picture. The standard deviation was an adequate figure to express the amount of concurrence among the thirty-three instructors with respect to this survey on grading.

Data Method for Each Group of Pictures for a Comparison
of the Abstract Pictures Against the Realistic Pictures

Paintings, numbers one through six, were the abstract pictures and paintings; numbers seven through twelve were the realistic pictures. The mean was found for the two groups of pictures and then compared in order to assess the amount of variations of their ratings. The mean indicated whether or not the instructors had expressed some preference for one group or the other.

Data Method for Each Group of Pictures with Respect to
Variations as a Result of the Sizes of the Schools and the
Sizes of the Cities in Which the Instructors Surveyed Were
Located

From the thirty-three data forms attained, ten forms were selected which showed figures representing the ten largest schools. Also, ten forms were selected which indicated that the instructors surveyed were from the ten smallest schools. Ten forms at each extreme of the sample were chosen so that any differences due to variations of school enrollment alone would be quite pronounced in the analysis. Inclusion of the middle range of school sizes would have de-emphasized any possible differences. The mean was then computed for the two groups with reference to each group of abstract paintings and each group of realistic paintings. The

resultant average mean scores gave figures which indicated the amount of variability between instructors of small secondary schools and instructors of large secondary schools with respect to rating abstract paintings and realistic paintings. Also, these figures gave an indication of whether or not instructors in small and large secondary schools tend to favor abstract paintings or realistic paintings.

It was found from the survey data that all the large schools were located in relatively large cities or heavily populated areas and the smaller schools were located in small towns or rural areas. Therefore, the conclusions drawn from the comparisons of data concerning the size of the schools in which the instructors were located would also apply positively in a comparison of town size.

Summary

Library research was carefully carried out in an effort to gain related information about secondary art instructors and grading. The paintings and data forms were gathered and the survey was performed. The recorded data were then analyzed. The results of this analysis are reviewed in Chapter V.

CHAPTER V

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

After analyzing the recorded data, some very interesting information concerning secondary art instructors and grading was revealed.

The lowest standard deviation figure of the entire twelve paintings occurred with respect to painting number five with a standard deviation of 1.3 (refer to Table I). Painting number five then became the painting which had the least amount of variability in rank scores. Painting number seven had a 2.93 standard deviation (refer to Table II), which was the highest deviation score of the group.

The average mean for the abstract paintings was 6.763 and the average mean for the realistic paintings was 6.687 (refer to Table II), which indicates that as a total group, those instructors surveyed did not tend to favor one type of painting over another.

Tables three and four were included in this thesis in order to study the relationships of instructors of small schools to instructors of large schools. The average mean for the abstract paintings was 6.51 and the average mean for the realistic paintings was 6.49 (refer to Table III) with respect to the teachers surveyed from the ten largest schools. Therefore, no appreciable amount of difference was

shown here for either abstract painting over realistic or realistic painting over abstract as a type or group preference.

However, the teachers from the ten smallest schools surveyed had an average mean score of 5.93 for realistic paintings and 7.06 (refer to Table IV) for the abstract paintings which gave some indication that as a group, the teachers from the ten smallest schools surveyed had a tendency to rank realistic paintings as being somewhat better than abstract paintings. It was deduced, therefore, that instructors from small schools tend to rate paintings which are more realistic as being slightly better than those which are abstract as a result of the data shown in this survey. Apparently, the size of the school or the city is a factor on the type of art the instructor prefers.

It came to the writer's attention that some instructors, after hearing the directions for the survey and seeing the group of paintings in which they were to rank, tried to find fault with the survey or expressed some general dislike for the quality of the paintings. These people consistently took the greatest length of time ranking the pictures whereas those instructors who quickly found some paintings which they particularly enjoyed and tried to find no problem with the survey, tended to rank the paintings rapidly. In general,

the time spent in ranking the twelve paintings was about five to thirty minutes for each instructor.

No appreciable amount of variation was observed as to the manner in which female instructors ranked the paintings with respect to how the males ranked the paintings. The data form used did not include the male-female aspect, but it was the writer's observation that little difference occurred in the reactions in the survey with respect to the sex of the participating teachers.

TABLE I
ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Picture Number	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	7.82	2.71
2	9.94	1.71
3	3.06	1.69
4	6.52	1.76
5	3.06	1.30
6	10.18	1.94
7	6.61	2.93
8	9.12	2.03
9	7.55	2.92
10	2.93	2.57
11	8.82	2.89
12	5.09	2.60

TABLE II
THE MEANS OF THE TWO GROUPS OF PAINTINGS
("PSYCHEDELIC AND HEADS")

Mean Scores	
Abstract Paintings	Realistic Paintings
7.82	6.61
9.94	9.12
3.06	7.55
6.52	2.93
3.06	8.82
<u>10.18</u>	<u>5.09</u>
6.76	6.69
Average Mean	Average Mean

TABLE III

THE MEAN SCORES OF THE REALISTIC PAINTINGS WITH
RESPECT TO THE TEN LARGEST SCHOOLS
AND THE TEN SMALLEST SCHOOLS

Mean Scores	
Small Schools	Large Schools
5.67	6.00
5.17	7.67
5.00	6.17
5.83	6.83
6.17	7.50
6.00	6.67
5.50	6.83
5.83	6.83
7.33	5.17
6.83	5.17
5.93	6.49
Average Group Mean	Average Group Mean

TABLE IV
THE MEAN SCORES OF THE ABSTRACT PAINTINGS WITH
RESPECT TO THE TEN LARGEST SCHOOLS
AND THE TEN SMALLEST SCHOOLS

Mean Scores	
Small Schools	Large Schools
7.33	7.00
7.83	5.33
8.00	6.83
7.16	6.16
6.83	5.50
7.00	6.30
7.50	6.16
7.16	6.16
5.66	7.83
<u>6.16</u>	<u>7.83</u>
7.06	6.51
Average Group Mean	Average Group Mean

Note: Pertaining to Tables III and IV (pp. 20-1), the ten smallest schools had total student body enrollments ranging from forty-five to five hundred students. The ten largest schools had total student body enrollments ranging from one thousand sixty-five to eighteen hundred students.

TABLE V
RANK PLACEMENT OF THE PAINTINGS WITH RESPECT
TO EACH PAINTING'S MEAN SCORE

Mean Score	Picture Number
2.93	10
3.06	5
3.06	3
5.09	12
6.52	4
6.61	7
7.55	9
7.82	1
8.82	11
9.12	8
9.94	2
10.18	6

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

As a result of this survey, the following conclusions can be stated:

1. Secondary art instructors within the State of Washington tend to disagree with each other with respect to ranking the same paintings done by juniors in secondary schools progressively in order of preference.
2. Secondary art instructors within the State of Washington tend to show no preference for realistic paintings over abstract paintings, or vice versa, when ranking the same paintings done by juniors in secondary schools.
3. Art instructors from large secondary schools (total student enrollment from 1,065 to 1,800) of the State of Washington tend to show no preference for any one type of painting (realistic or abstract) over another.
4. Art instructors in the small secondary schools (total student enrollment from 45 to 500) of the State of Washington tend to show a very slight preference for realistic paintings over abstract paintings when ranking the same painting progressively.
5. Art instructors from the smaller secondary schools of the State of Washington tend to show a slight preference for realistic paintings over abstract paintings with respect to the art instructors from the larger secondary schools of the State of Washington.
6. Secondary art instructors from large cities or heavily populated areas of the State of Washington tend to show no preference for any one type of painting (realistic or abstract) over another.

7. Secondary art instructors from small cities or rural areas of the State of Washington tend to express a slight preference for realistic paintings over abstract paintings when ranking the same paintings progressively.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Areas for possible further study have become evident as a result of this survey, and they include:

1. What criteria for grading art does each instructor seem to follow?
2. Does "hard edged" painting have greater appeal to art instructors than painting using soft merging forms?
3. Would a definite trend in masculinity or femininity in a painting cause secondary art instructors to lean toward one or the other with respect to preference?
4. Do female art instructors favor certain types of painting more so than male instructors?
5. Why do art instructors from small schools tend to favor realistic paintings slightly more than abstract paintings?
6. To what extent does an art instructor's background training in art effect his grading of art work? To be specific, would instructors with a major in art tend to prefer certain types of paintings differently than an instructor with only an art minor or less preparation in the field?
7. How would an instructor's sophistication in a single area of art effect his judgments of paintings. For example, would an instructor who is more sophisticated in painting tend to rank or grade art work differently than one who is primarily a sculptor?

8. Would the conclusions in this study hold true if sculpture or some other art form would have been used for the survey instead of paintings? For example, if art instructors were asked to rank sculpture, would greater trends in agreement occur than if they were asked to rank paintings?
9. What effect on the amount of concurrence held among art instructors with respect to grading would a limit of time have on their judgments? For this survey, there was no time limit given to each teacher. What would occur if each teacher would have been told he must complete the ranking within three to five minutes or some similar time limitation.
10. To what extent would the geographical location of the school in which an art instructor received his education have on his judgments of art? Perhaps an art instructor educated in an Eastern college would judge art differently than an art instructor educated in a Western college.
11. Would size alone have any bearing on how an art instructor would judge a painting? Could it be that art instructors prefer large paintings over small, or small paintings over large?
12. To what extent would the size of the educational institution from which an art instructor received his education affect his judgments of art? Would a large university educated teacher tend to judge art differently than a smaller state college educated teacher?
13. What is the validity of high school art competition such as the annual Scholastic Art Contest in this state with reference to this study which points out the lack of concurrence among secondary art instructors?

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APPENDIX A



ILLUSTRATION ONE

Mean Score 2.93

Picture Number 10



ILLUSTRATION TWO

Mean Score 3.06

Picture Number 5



ILLUSTRATION THREE

Mean Score 3.06

Picture Number 3



ILLUSTRATION FOUR

Mean Score 5.09

Picture Number 12

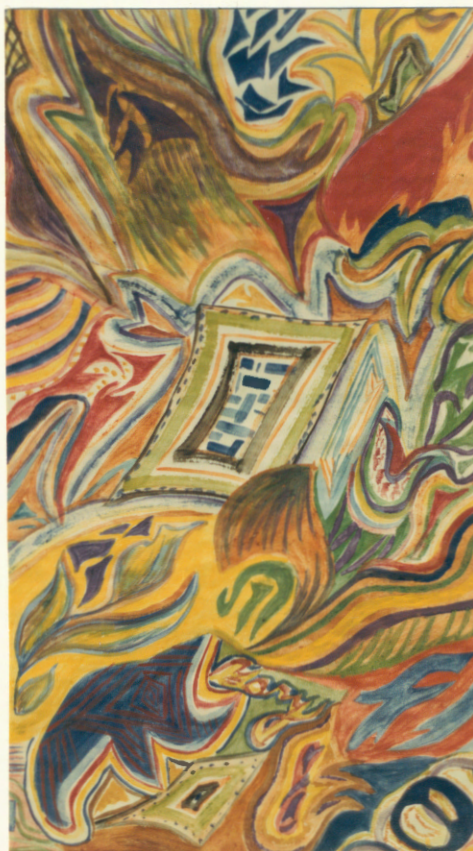


ILLUSTRATION FIVE

Mean Score 6.52

Picture Number 4



ILLUSTRATION SIX

Mean Score 6.61

Picture Number 7



ILLUSTRATION SEVEN

Mean Score 7.55

Picture Number 9



ILLUSTRATION EIGHT

Mean Score 7.82

Picture Number 1



ILLUSTRATION NINE

Mean Score 8.82

Picture Number 11



Mean Score 9.12

Picture Number 8



ILLUSTRATION ELEVEN

Mean Score 9.94

Picture Number 2



ILLUSTRATION TWELVE

Mean Score 10.18

Picture Number 6

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX B

ART SURVEY RATING FORM

Background Information

All of the twelve paintings were done by Juniors enrolled in a three-year high school. All were in their second year of high school art. The time spent by each student on each painting was five class hours, and the students were instructed to use tempera paint only.

Two themes were given to the students. One was "psychedelic" and the other was "heads". The 12" x 18" paintings are the results of the "psychedelic" assignment and the larger 18" x 24" paintings are the results of the "heads" assignment.

Directions

You are to place the twelve paintings in order from left to right with respect to the one you rate as best to the one you rate as the poorest.

- | | | |
|----------|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 5. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 6. _____ | 10. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 7. _____ | 11. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 8. _____ | 12. _____ |

Number enrolled in school: _____

Population of city: _____